

# One Hot Mess

You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll feel better about yourself. I promise.

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

## Energy and the Laws of Motion: Final Reflections on the Women's March on Washington

I'm rounding out and wrapping up my series of posts on the DC Women's March with a description of my main takeaway.

It starts with Newton's three laws of motion:

1. An object at rest stays at rest unless and until it is acted on by a resultant force (e.g., a table resting on the ground will not move unless pushed).
2. Acceleration depends on the forces acting on it and the mass of the object (Force = mass x acceleration).
3. For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

The analogy is imperfect, but: (1) My conscience is the object that was at rest until acted on by the force of developing history; (2) How I respond (or don't) depends on various outside forces, their power, and the mass of my conscience; and (3) For every negative action, there is an equal and opposite positive reaction I can choose to have.

I've touched on these issues [before](#), but participating in the march really brought home a simple, singular truth: we only get one life. We only have so much time, energy and attention to devote to the things we care about. We alone get to decide what matters to us and how best to honor those things, and we have finite resources of time, money, energy, and attention with which to do so.

That's why I've chosen to channel my energy and momentum in a positive as opposed to negative direction.

I'm not interested in having online or in-person arguments with strangers (or with friends and family, for that matter) about why I think Donald Trump is a terrible person.

I lack the motivation to "convert" people to my way of thinking about feminism, race relations, and the climate.

I don't have time to defend my participation in democracy, listen to other people criticize peaceful protesting, or explain why peaceful protesting is basic patriotism at work as opposed to a dumb waste of time for privileged snowflakes.

I couldn't be less afraid of the ramifications (personal or professional) of speaking out loudly--and often--against a person who poses the kind of objective threat to democracy and humanity that Donald Trump does. If anything, I'm afraid of being silent, complacent, and complicit.

This is what I carry with me from the march: a mandate to my conscience to remain in motion, propelled by the energy of millions of like-minded citizens who marched on Washington and the world last weekend.

To allow my conscience to accelerate toward what I know in my own heart is good, right, and just without allowing the forces of doubt and fruitless arguments and the cross-lobbing of insults to slow it down.

To make my reactions positive ones that push back against and rise above the noisy fray of self-doubt and the hurling of invective from people who don't really care to engage in anything approaching reasoned discourse anyway.

To not let anything, least of all internet trolls and disorienting media rabbit holes, become the objects

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that stop my conscience in its tracks. Instead, I want my conscience to be the object that stops affronts to democracy in *their* tracks.

This weekend, I saw that I am not alone. I experienced with my own eyes, ears, and body the life-force that will allow my conscience to remain in motion.

It was powerful. It was enormous. It was peaceful. It was beautiful. And it was real.



Posted by [One Hot Mess](#) at 3:08 PM



Labels: [Women](#)

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**Suddenly Susan** January 24, 2017 at 3:42 PM

It was powerful. It was enormous. It was peaceful. It was beautiful. And it was real.

YES. YES, IT WAS!

[Reply](#)



**Angel** January 24, 2017 at 6:26 PM

Hi. Someone (maybe <http://eb-misfit.blogspot.com/>) posted a link to your "America Announces Divorce from Reality" which I thought was really great! I've been reading your blog since then (and going back to earlier entries).

I really appreciate this post, since it's been hard for me to articulate why the marches were important to me. But they were important! and a wonderful "peaceful presence" as a very small first step, to I don't know where.

I'm interested in the 10 actions in 100 days, and trying to focus change and action more locally (<https://www.womensmarch.com/100/>). It's great to hear something so affirming of my thoughts and feelings from a total stranger on the other side of the country.

Thanks again for so eloquently sharing your thoughts.

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**One Hot Mess**

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Angel Johnston  
Chicago, IL

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**One Hot Mess** January 25, 2017 at 8:11 AM

Thank you, Angel.

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**Katie B.** January 24, 2017 at 11:18 PM

Beautiful. Thank YOU!

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